

Hobbies

Beware of bronze Lincoln pennies that stick to the fridge

By Roger Boye

Today's column answers more questions from Chicago Tribune readers.

Q—I own a 1943 Lincoln penny made out of copper—rather than steel—and I'm told that my coin is extremely rare. Do you agree?

J.N., Chicago

A—It's probably not.

During 1943, Uncle Sam produced Lincoln cents out of zinc-coated steel to preserve copper for war weapons. But government

workers apparently minted fewer than 100 bronze pennies dated 1943 with "blanks" made for production of 1942 bronze Lincolns. One of those 1943 coins sold for \$10,000 in 1981.

Over the years, pranksters have created thousands of fake 1943 bronze cents by plating the authentic steel coins with copper. You should show your coin to a dealer or other expert.

By the way, a fake copper-plated steel cent is magnetic; an authentic 1943 bronze cent isn't.

Q—I've got a dozen Eisenhow-

er dollars from the 1970s, mostly 1971s, 1972s and 1976s. Is there profit potential in these coins?

J.K., Evanston

A—Ike dollars made for circulation between 1971 and 1978 have no special value as collectibles unless they are in choice, uncirculated condition.

Q—I'm told to buy old coins with "CC" mint marks. Why would they be valuable?

N.M., Oak Park

A—"CC" designates the Carson City, Nev., mint, which operated from 1870 to 1893. The

Carson City staff produced relatively small numbers of coins, which today makes many "CC" issues scarce.

Q—Last year, after reading an item in your column, I ordered from the government 10 of the 1990 Eisenhower commemorative silver dollars, but I still have no coins. The check was cashed in October. What do I do now?

G.B., Chicago

A—Write to the United States Mint's Customer Service Center at 10001 Aerospace Drive, Lanham, Md. 20706, or call 301-

436-7400 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. You may be asked for information from your canceled check.

Q—How much does it cost to join the American Numismatic Association? What are the advantages?

A.D., Western Springs

A—Annual dues for persons 18 and older are \$26, plus a \$6 processing fee for the first year. The ANA publishes *The Numismatist*, a 200-page monthly, and maintains the world's largest circulating library of coin books.